

DISCUSSION OF THE AMENDMENT

Claims 1-31 are active in the present application. Claim 1 now recites a contacting temperature of -70 to 50° C. Support for the amendment is found on pages 17 and 18. The dependent claims are amended for matters of form. Claims 29-31 are new claims. Support for new Claim 29 is found on page 29. Support for new Claim 30 is found on page 20. Support for new Claim 31 is found on page 16.

No new matter is added.

REMARKS

Independent Claim 1 recites a process for purifying hexafluoropropylene oxide (HFPO). The process of Claim 1 includes contacting a reaction product containing HFPO with an adsorbent. The contacting is carried out a temperature of from -70 to +50° C. As described throughout the present specification, the contacting of Claim 1 removes undesired impurities such as hexafluoroacetone (HFA) and fluorine-containing acids from the reaction product to thereby provide a purified HFPO.

The Office rejected Claim 1 as anticipated by a patent to Ohsaka (US 4,288,376). The Office asserts that Ohsaka discloses a process in which an HFPO-containing mixture is contacted with a barium salt (which the Office asserts is a Group 2 metal oxide) and thus anticipates the presently claimed invention. Applicants submit that Ohsaka does not disclose or suggest a process for purifying HFPO by contacting an HFPO-containing mixture with any of the adsorbents recited in present Claim 1 at a temperature of from -70 to +50° C.

In fact, Ohsaka makes it clear that the prior art process is one that is used for “preparing” HFPO (see the title of Ohsaka) in contrast to “purifying” HFPO. The process of Ohsaka includes reacting hexafluoropropylene (HFP) with oxygen to form HFPO. The reaction of HFP with oxygen is carried out in the presence of, for example, a barium salt.

The conditions under which the reaction of Ohsaka is carried out are described as follows:

The preferred range of temperature is from 100° to 350° C, particularly from 150° to 300° C. At a temperature lower than 100° C, the conversion of hexafluoropropylene is lower.

See column 2, lines 8-11 of Ohsaka.

Applicants submit that Ohsaka, at best, discloses a process for preparing HFPO that includes contacting HFP with oxygen in the presence of barium at high temperatures, e.g., temperatures of greater than 100°C. Applicants submit that Ohsaka’s explicit disclosure that

temperatures lower than 100°C cause low conversion of HFP teaches away from the presently claimed invention which recites contacting a HFPO-containing reaction product with an adsorbent at a temperature of -70 to +50°C. Thus, not only does Ohsaka fail to explicitly disclose the presently claimed invention, Ohsaka teaches away from any modification of the disclosed process such that one of ordinary skill in the art would not have any expectation of successfully arriving at the presently claimed invention.

Applicants thus request withdrawal of the rejection.

Applicants draw the Office's attention to new dependent Claim 31 which recites contacting such that HFP does not react with oxygen. Support for new Claim 31 is found in the paragraph bridging pages 15 and 16 where it is disclosed that HFP is an inert gas (e.g., a gas that is unreacted) under the conditions of the contacting of Claim 1.

Applicants submit that new dependent Claim 31 is further patentable over Ohsaka for the reason that Claim 31 excludes the Ohsaka process which requires the reaction of HFP with oxygen to form HFPO.

Applicants submit the amendment to the claims obviates the Office's objection to the claims on grounds of indefiniteness.

For the reasons discussed above, Applicants submit the present claims are novel and not obvious over the art relied on by the Office. Applicants thus respectfully request withdrawal of the rejections.

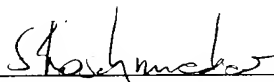
INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Applicants submitted an IDS listing four references together with the filing of the present application on July 12, 2004. The Office returned a partially initialed copy of Applicants' PTO-1449 with the Office Action of August 1, 2006, however, this form failed to acknowledge at least two of the references cited on the IDS, i.e., references AO and AW.

Applicants request the Office return a copy of Applicants' 2004 IDS including the Examiner's initials next to each reference provided thereon to acknowledge the consideration of all references during the prosecution of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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